

California Postsecondary Education Commission**Improving Teacher Quality State Grants Program****Project Description**

Project Title	California Science Project Teacher Retention Initiative for Inland Northern California	
Grant Amount: \$334,000	Grant Period: February 1, 2007 to January 30, 2011	
Grade Level:	Subject Matter: Science	
Institute of Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> California State University, Chico	
Local Education Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Additional Partners:	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Need for Project/ Population To Be Served:	<p>In Northeastern California, 97% of the schools qualify as high poverty based on CPEC guidelines. Teachers in middle and high schools in rural communities find it difficult to develop professionally, especially in a content area such as science since, for many, they are the only person in that content area at their school site. New teachers are especially isolated since many of their colleagues have been teaching for more than ten years and have reduced motivation to become involved in professional development programs.</p> <p>New teachers frequently receive the least desirable assignments in terms of courses and classrooms. Onsite mentors in the content area who are able to assist with laboratory set ups, embedded assessments, equipment availability, scheduling, and a variety of other daily challenges are rare and often new teachers are left to fend for themselves. The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program mentors for the first two years but not in the content area and not for critical years 3-5.</p>	
Project Goals:	<p>The primary goal is to establish communities of practice for professional development in science teaching and learning such that retention of middle and high school teachers is enhanced at the school site. Goals to be met in developing communities of practice include: provide a framework within which individual needs of teachers will be met; provide technical assistance in mentoring and coaching and mentor coordination; integrate professional development in literacy with professional development in science content and pedagogical content knowledge to meet the needs of low performing students and students in schools that are focusing on language arts and math at the expense of science; identify areas of shared practice and develop shared understanding and ownership in communities of practice; develop departmental unity and establish common goals for the larger learning community; channel experiences of inservice teachers into the science coursework of teacher preparation programs at the university.</p>	
Summary of Activities:	<p>Eligible schools and districts will be selected on a competitive basis dependent on the commitment level of the collective staff and administration to the goals of the program. Needs assessment meetings facilitated by project leadership within each participating department will establish action plans for individuals and for the communities of practice to which they belong. Baseline surveys will be given initially and teachers will be surveyed yearly for the duration of the project to monitor impact of the program on teacher development and student achievement. Science content institutes each summer during the program will focus on content knowledge and pedagogy. Follow up programs during the academic year will address curriculum implementation and development. As the lead mentoring site we will provide content based induction in collaboration with the BTSA programs as well as mentoring in years 3-5. Core team reflection trainings at school sites will focus on authentic assessment of student work. Communities of practice will address peer review, and CSU, Chico's Masters Degree in Science Teaching and awareness and assistance of the National Board Certification process, in addition to opportunities to work with the teacher in residence program for undergraduate teacher preparation early field experiences, will provide pathways for career advancement compatible with remaining in the classroom.</p>	

Outcomes Expected:	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher participation in both professional development activities and professional learning communities will provide professional support, encouragement and community that enables effective teaching and generates long term commitments to the students and schools where they practice.		
Teachers Served	120	Students Served	12000
Project Website:			
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